

## health

# Blood test breakthrough

WESTERN suburbs researchers have developed a new blood test that identifies if a woman will deliver her baby early.

The Women and Infants Research Foundation (WIRF) at King Edward Memorial Hospital (KEMH) and University of WA School of Women's and Infants' Health collaborated with researchers from Canada and Singapore on the project.

The test identifies if specific



**Craig Pennell.**

labour (TPTL).

WIRF Associate Professor Craig Pennell said the blood test

genetic signatures associated with pre-term labour are present in the blood of women at risk of threatened premature

was developed through a study of 150 pregnant women with TPTL admitted to KEMH.

"The blood test is much more reliable than current methods in determining if a woman having early contractions will give birth prematurely," Professor Pennell said.

"Of those women experiencing TPTL, only an estimated five per cent will deliver a premature baby within 10 days."